

REVIEWS.

REVIEWS.

THE CANADIAN MONTHLY AND NATIONAL REVIEW. June, 1878. Hunter, Rose & Co. Toronto.

There was a time when people wished well to this periodical. It has, however, for some time past contained a series of articles similar in tone to those written in England and the Continent by the free-thinkers, deists, rationalists, positivists, materialists, &c., of the day, and this whilst the high-sounding title with which it began its career is retained. This is a mistake. We have yet to learn that the followers of Voltaire, Tyndal, Harrison, Huxley, and others represent the national element of this Canada of ours. We thank the managers, however, for one thing, and that is, that the doctrines which the wisdom of even worldly men have pronounced to be most detrimental to a country's greatness, most subversive of law and order, are presented in such a manner that they have to the average mind somewhat the effect intended to be produced by the Spartan parents who gave their children goblets of wine to drink in which reptiles had been placed. There is withal, in most of the articles to which we allude, so much ignorance, and so many misapplications as well as such a "fortuitous concurrence" of contradictory arguments and hopeless absurdities combined with such an assumption of intellectual eminence as to breed contempt even in the minds of those who are not even professing Christians. Such literature, however, cannot but have most injurious and poisonous effect upon the minds of large classes in the community, and this is our excuse for alluding at any length to matters not strictly within our limits, but which are contained in a periodical sent to us for review.

Some months ago, in the same periodical a comparison was drawn between Mohamedanism and Christianity, and, in the opinion of the writer, the former was probably the most desirable superstition of the two. One of the leading articles this month is headed "The New Refor-

mation." The writer states himself to be a member of the "Progressive Society of Ottawa," (whatever that may be), for which Society this paper was written. He begins with the argument that because all professing Christians do not live up to the pattern which they claim has been set them, therefore Christianity did not come as a direct gift from the Supreme Being, and there is in fact no Supreme Being such as Christians superstitiously worship, but there is "Nature" and there is "Truth," and Truth is to be worshipped "by the endeavour to place our lives in harmony with what we recognise as the good and pure in our nature." But it is said also that "nature knows no forgiveness," and it is admitted that "our Cosmos has not reached perfection," though it is "progressing towards perfection, and will, eventually, we all hope, reach that goal." It is clear, therefore, that the present inhabitants of our Cosmos are in a very hopeless condition, for it is admitted that they are as yet far from perfect.

Persons, however, who die in their sins, and like the members of this Society "neither hope nor expect to be forgiven," will have the comforting assurance that their descendants who may live some thousands of years hence will probably arrive at perfection and need no forgiveness. It is possible, however, that the perfection of this world may *not* be "evolved," although we are told, as one of the unanswerable arguments in favour of it, that "the savage instinct of war is dying out. Science is killing it." Yet this rubbish is written when the shrieks of murdered and mutilated women and children are still sounding in our ears from intellectual Europe, and the horrors of the Communism are still unforgotten in its capital.

This writer's profound knowledge of the springs of human thought and action are shown by his holding up as a motive for leading a good life, stronger than gratitude for the love of a dying Saviour, the laudable endeavour to evolve perfection for the benefit of the human race at some remote period of the world's history!

Christianity is described as a "persecuting spirit." It is moreover commend-